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THE STATUE OF INY AND  
RENNUT

IN December, 1913, Saïd Bey Kha-shabah of Assiut, with the collaboration of Ahmed Bey Kamal of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, excavated to the north-west of the mountain of Assiut in a cemetery which had served the ancient town of Lycopolis from the days of the Old Kingdom down to Graeco-Roman times. Among their finds were the bas-reliefs which had lined the walls of the tomb of a certain Amenhotep, a life-sized statue of his son Iny, and a half life-sized statue of the same Iny and his wife Rennut, all of the late Eighteenth or early Nineteenth Dynasty (about 1400-1200 B. C.). The tomb chamber and the first statue were set up in the provincial museum at Assiut, which Saïd Bey has endowed for his native town, and the second statue was purchased for the Metropolitan Museum, where it has been on exhibition for some time in the Eleventh Egyptian Room. There has recently come to hand Ahmed Bey's description of the tomb and statue in Assiut,<sup>1</sup> and it seems appropriate to bring out a note on our statue.

The decorated chapel of Amenhotep was quite small—seven and a half feet long by five wide and a little over seven feet high—and probably was only part of a family mausoleum which it is quite possible Iny erected. The sculptures show the weighing of Amenhotep's heart before Osiris, and Amenhotep and his wife (like Iny's wife, named Rennut) adoring the gods and receiving the offerings given the dead. The statue of Iny in Assiut represents him kneeling behind a shrine of Osiris which contains a standing statue of the god. Iny wears a large perruque and a little beard, a broad collar and a Hathor-head amulet, large bracelets, an elaborately pleated garment, and woven sandals. On the plinth at the back, his wife, the second Rennut, is represented in relief.

The Metropolitan Museum statue<sup>2</sup> is 2 ft. 10 in. [84.5 cm.] high, carved of fine

white limestone. When found, the head of the man had been knocked off and used by somebody as a maul, so that the features were badly battered; a great sliver had been broken off the body down as far as the waist, and the two forearms had been hammered away. The result was that the figure was rather unsightly, but so many traces remained to guide a restoration that it was decided to replace the missing parts. This was done in plaster following the outlines so conscientiously that there can be no doubt that the statue of the man as restored is a faithful representation of its original form. No other part of the group was touched.

Iny and his wife sit upon two chairs with lion-clawed feet. At a first glance it would appear that one broad seat is intended, for the sculptor has left out the chair legs which should appear between the two figures. But the drawings on the stela on the back of this statue, and the similar little group published in the BULLETIN of October, 1916, show that two ordinary chairs are meant. Iny's hands lie in his lap, the left one holding a handkerchief. "His wife, the beloved from the bottom of his heart, the lady of charms before all people, Rennut," sits beside him with a *menat* in her lap and her right arm around his shoulders. If they make a rather stiff picture and their affectionate attitude is a little stilted to our way of thinking, there is many a family photograph album of a generation ago in which the devoted couples are not a bit less self-conscious or more at their ease than this ancient Egyptian pair.

Both wear the enormous curled perruques of their day, the man's to the shoulders, the woman's longer and bound about the forehead with a band of lotus flowers. Iny wears a thin linen shirt with short, pleated sleeves, a long skirt with a wide pleated apron in front, and woven papyrus sandals. Rennut has on her breast the "broad collar" made up of rows of amulets and flower petals, and a long, tightly fitting garment knotted on the right side. Her feet are bare. Lines of inscriptions on the man's skirt, across the front of the pedestal, and behind the chairs on either side are introduced decoratively. Of color

<sup>1</sup>Annales du Service des Antiquités, vol. xvi, page 86.

<sup>2</sup>Acc. No. 15.2.1.

there seems to have been none except black on the wigs and eyes of both figures.

The back of the statue is not the least interesting part. The sculptor has used it to carve an admirable mortuary stela, showing two of the funerary ceremonies that meant so much to the ancient Egyptians. Above, he has drawn Iny and

of every Egyptian monument, partly as a decoration and partly as an explanation which will assure the accomplishment of the purpose for which the work was intended. In this case the motive was to immortalize the name of Iny, and by impressing the beholder with the important place he held in his day, to gain for him



STATUE OF INY AND RENNUT  
LATE XVIII OR EARLY XIX DYNASTY

Rennut, seated very much as in the statue, in front of a table heaped with good things, while the priest stands before them with censer and vessel, "making a divine libation and burning incense to the Chief Royal Scribe, Iny," as the inscription above informs us. Below it the father and mother of Rennut are seated at the pious ceremony of "immortalizing his name, by his daughter the Lady and Singer of Amonrê, Rennut, and her maid, Hathor."

The inscription forms an integral part

in some way a similar position for all time. It almost seems a work of piety to his memory to puzzle out the grandiose phrases of his epitaph and to spread his fame among the people of so distant a city, and equally, from the point of view of the student, it is interesting to know what manner of man lived in a small city like Assiut and patronized the able craftsman who carved this statue.

From the tomb and statue in the Assiut museum, and from this group here,

the following account of him can be given.

Iny's family was of that educated class of men who by their training had open to them a career in government service and therefore were entitled to be called "royal scribes." His father was the Principal Physician Amenhotep, a chief reader in the temple and a person of some consequence, who was called "the Judge," but "judge" had so often been used by people who never sat in court that by this time it had come to correspond very closely to our mode of address, "the Honorable." His mother was the Lady Rennut, who like all of the other socially proper ladies of her day, sang in the temples of Assiut's patron god, Wepwawet, and of the national god Amonrê. The family of Iny's wife, who it will be remembered was likewise named Rennut, belonged also to the "royal scribe" class. Her father Yaï was the Superintendent of the Necropolis and a recipient of royal favors, and her mother was the Lady Yia. Rennut herself belonged to the same guilds of lady temple singers as her mother-in-law, and in addition was the leader of the women's chapter in the temple of Hathor, Goddess of Maz, just south of Assiut. Altogether we have here a picture of the substantial folk of a smaller Egyptian city, who held respectable offices in the king's government and read the lessons and sang the chants in the neighboring chapels on feast days.

Iny himself played a rather important rôle in his city as a high office-holder in that complex bureaucracy when the king was the law and the priesthood was rapidly becoming the largest property holder. In fact, he was probably the most influential member of the family; for in his person were united both lay and priestly offices as a Royal Secretary and as Chief of the *Wab*-priests of the Lord of the Two Lands, and with these duties went those of Chief Royal Scribe, Steward or Agent, and Superintendent of the Offices of the Lord of the Two Lands. In other words, Iny was

the royal administrator of the priesthood and probably the agency through which the government's allotments to the religious establishment passed, and as such the chief of an important bureau and the dispenser of a great deal of the royal patronage in Assiut. And then, in addition to being Chief of the *Wab*-priests, Iny held other positions in the hierarchy. He was a "head reader, a royal *sam*-priest who led in the festivals of his gods, and an initiate in the mysteries" of one of the temples.

So much for his active offices. It was the custom for a functionary of importance to be the recipient of innumerable high-sounding and venerable titles and dignities which in their day had carried solid benefits and obligations but which long ago had become empty of all power. Thus Iny boasts of being Count, Chancellor, Sole Friend, Judge, Administrator of the Province, Privy Councillor of the Duat House, and Magnate of the King. These titles, everyone knew, had become mere names, but Iny would have us understand that he was no upstart, sham courtier. He claims an actual entrée at the court as one "who enters into the presence of the King of Upper Egypt, and draws near to the King of Lower Egypt; one who fills the ears of Horus, the King, with truth, who is loved by His Majesty every day and is truly his friend; the mouthpiece of the King throughout the country; one great in his honors and his distinctions, and a prince before the people, whom the King has made great to the uttermost boundaries of the land."

Even if Iny's protestations of greatness leave us a little skeptical, at least we can admit that they express his highest ambitions and those of his caste. Exaltation of the king or even the humblest service under him was the inspiration of their existence, and the pomp of the court, its fanciful dress and stilted formality, was as scrupulously followed in the smaller cities as in Thebes itself.

H. E. W.



STELA ON THE BACK OF THE STATUE  
OF INY AND RENNUT